THE

TUILERIES

BROCHURES

A SERIES OF MONOGRAPHS
ON EUROPEAN ARCHITECTURE
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO ROOFS OF TILE

TWO COTSWOLD VILLAGES

TEXT BY

ALFRED HOPKINS

JULY 1929

THE TUILERIES BROCHURES

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CASTLE COMBE, WILTSHIRE

JULY 1929

TWO COTSWOLD VILLAGES

BY ALFRED HOPKINS

YOUR true lover of beautiful building who travels over old England in quest of his heart's desire, must come sooner or later to that delightful district which is known as the Cotswold Hills. Perhaps it is better for him to come sooner than later, but since the keenest enjoyment follows upon the ripest knowledge, a tardy study of architectural treasure there may come to yield a greater pleasure. At any rate, go he must if he wishes to see how the simplest builder's material may be used to create in the perfect landscape, the perfect structure.

Beautiful Broadway and nearby Stanton leap immediately into the mind of the student familiar with English country. They are both inspiring and important. They are convenient of access and perhaps demand a first attention. Let them have it. But there are other places which, if not equally conspicuous as starred points for Cotswold study, are just as worthy of attention; Bourton, Campden, Burford, Stroud, Gretton, Mickleton, Castle Combe and Bibury. No matter how short the time or how long the itinerary, let the student either extend the one or contract the other that he may have a glimpse of these last two charming places: Castle Combe lying snug beneath the trees of a verdant English hillside and little Bibury lined along the bank of the sleepy Coln just far enough removed for pleasant walking and safe enough for comfortable building. Castle Combe and Bibury have been favorite places for English painters these many years, as indeed has the whole Cotswold district.

Castle Combe is the perfect English village. The long highway broadening at the top finds itself a little square where stands, covered over with its old lichened roof, the wayside cross. A market cross you will see it called in the glossary, for the structure provides not only a shelter for its symbol of faith and sacrifice, but a protected place for merchandising as well. Nearby rises the beautiful tower of the parish church. Dr. Charles Cox, in his informing volume, "The English Parish Church," exclaims in rapture over the added beauty which the village churches give to rural England, and says in effect, "What would the English landscape be without them?" What would it indeed? I confess that I never see a church tower in that pleasant countryside without thinking of the good doctor and thanking him for pointing out so vividly how perfect may be the relation between the art of nature and the art of the architect.

Nowhere does this happy harmony between straight, rigid masonry walls and the flowing, moving lines of plants and trees exist in such perfection as in England. A magic seems to dwell there which comes to no other spot. Stone walls melt into foliage and foliage into stone walls without perceptible change of form or wrench of structure. It is here the student of the antique may learn his lesson in beautiful surfacing, and it seems to me he need not be so very clever in order to learn it well. Here he may find how gracefully does the fabric of architecture grow old. Here he may see with what perfect art nature encompasses and embellishes it. Here he may compare those varied effects of tone and texture that winter and rough weather in their own time come to give old stone walls. It is to this variety and beauty in the surfaces of old work to which I particularly call attention, because these effects are so lacking in our modern structure. They are not only ignored and misunderstood; they remain unloved and unsought. I do not chide the architect for failing to reproduce a quality which only nature can contrive, but I do ask that he study the soft beauty

of old work that out of it he may glean some sort of profit for the benefit of his own.

A striking example of the importance of all this is before you. May I direct attention to the illustration on page 56 showing houses on the village green at Bibury. There you will see perfect building in its perfect setting. The two old houses at the far end of the picture are no chance acquaintances. They are old friends. From every artistic angle they are eminently satisfying. The roofs and the walls are weathered to a softness which is velvet. In a like condition of perfection is the nearer, smaller structure. If all three are not of the same date, certainly they are of the same decade. And now, brethren of the draughting room, I come to my point. Observe between the two old groups that modern connecting wall. Could any building be more brutal? Could any structure be more rigid, more inartistic in itself and more hideous by contrast than this thirty odd feet of newly plastered masonry? There you have an informing example of what may happen as a result of ill considered building.

I have held all my life that there is no structure too simple or too obscure for the artist's hand, at least, to try and make beautiful. Even a bit of garden wall may show taste and talent on the part of its architect. If ever there was a time when the builder should have profited by a study of old work, it is here. If ever there was a spot where nature cried out to learn from her, it is at this brief length of enclosing wall.

In studying the types of structure which Mr. Yerbury's excellent photographs put so handily before us, nothing interests me more than the way the old builders went about the dormers. Almost always they fit comfortably into the roofs, and I like to imagine that in this simple old work, dormers were built somehow as the building went along, without any very distinct preconceived idea of just what the dormer was to be till the builder came to it. This is slipshod thinking and bad practicing for the way we go about our work. Where the architect-builder with a trained eye for proportion labors upon the building and, as he constructs it, adjusts one detail to another: that is the perfect manner. But it is not the mode of our day. We must do our building all on paper, sign the contract and make no changes. While we study what we draw, we must see our cubes in two dimensions, and, as best we can, imagine the third. Dormers are difficult to visualize in this way. A casual glance at any one of our numerous building magazines will stress that point.

I came early to a plain way of thinking about the dormer. It seemed to me that second story windows should be either below the eaveline or fair and square above it. If you will glance at the illustration opposite which sets forth the celebrated Wakefield Tea Rooms of Castle Combe, you will see three of the four possible ways of lighting the second story. At Mr. Wakefield's premises, the second story windows come snugly below the eaveline and look cozy and comfortable in the cool of its long shadow. But on the adjoining property the dormers are designed on the half and half idea—half in the wall and half in the roof. In old England the friendly compromise in principle of "half and half" when applied to beverage ("'arf and 'arf" I believe it is to those who know it best) is a commendable weakness. Applied to dormers, it is not. Principally, because it muddles up the leaders and makes a mean job for the tinker. The leaders are either unduly increased or else drag themselves across the face of the building, creating ugly diagonal lines where all the others are either vertical or horizontal. That becomes not only a mean job for the architect, but one impossible of artistic solution. I never liked "'arf an' 'arf" dormers. They are best booted up above the eaveline. Mr. Wakefield booted his up halfway between the eave and the ridge. They sit down there very comfortably. In fact, they look as if they might lie down, which helps them better to appear at ease and at home. If the second story windows must cut the eaveline, put them in a gable. You will see some pretty ones in this fashion at Bibury.

But the characteristic Cotswold dormer is in stone and stands out upon the face of the wall. A simple form is seen in the row of little houses along the river at Bibury, shown on page 55. A more imposing manner is that of the Tudor house at Castle Combe (page 59), on which a later owner has added to the doorway a Georgian hood. These dormers are thrust well above the roof and seem to have been constructed as a result of some whim of the owner who, perhaps, insisted upon better headroom behind them. When the designer finished his task, I doubt if he knew whether he had built dormers or gables. I don't. But it is possible to run the gutter comfortably and continuously below them, a prerequisite to good dormer design.

The dormer is a fascinating study in construction and composition, as is all that pertains to building. Fascinating too is the study of just such structures as we have been considering, built of the simplest materials in the simplest way. After all, what the architect must provide for the home is comfort and shelter. If the best artistic sense is what all believe,

HOUSES AT CASTLE COMBE, WILTSHIRE

that the structure should express its function,—then the Cotswold builders have given to their work all that any artist can give. I think the clear proof of their having done so lies in the simple fact that after all the two hundred odd years of their honorable service, these little buildings still remain what they are in setting and in substance, perfect examples of the builder's art.

ARLINGTON ROW, BIBURY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

DETAIL OF ARLINGTON ROW, BIBURY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

HOUSES ALONG VILLAGE GREEN, BIBURY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

HOUSES ALONG THE COLN, BIBURY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

MARKET CROSS, CASTLE COMBE, WILTSHIRE

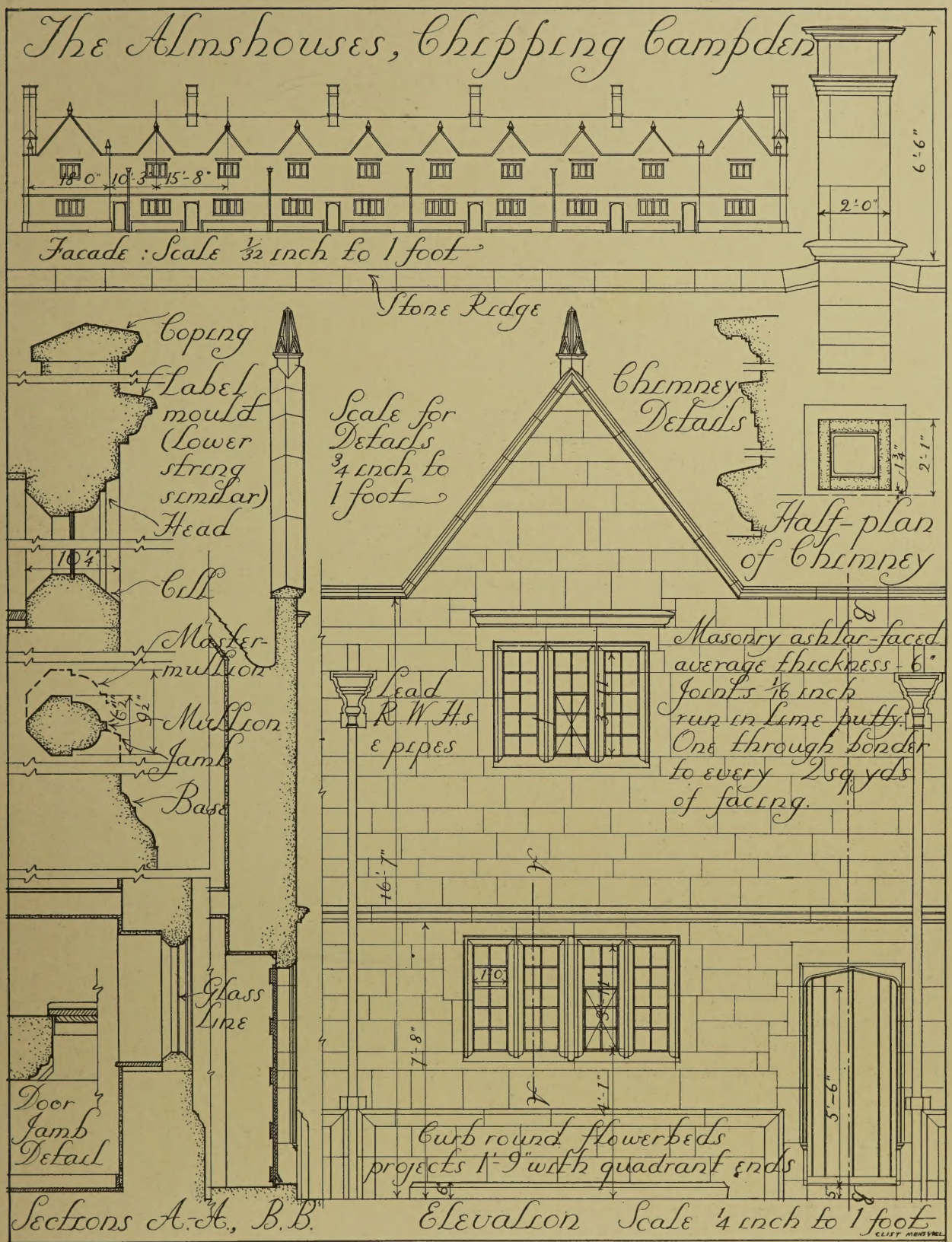
HOUSE AT CASTLE COMBE, WILTSHIRE

VILLAGE OF CASTLE COMBE, WILTSHIRE

COTTAGE AT CASTLE COMBE, WILTSHIRE

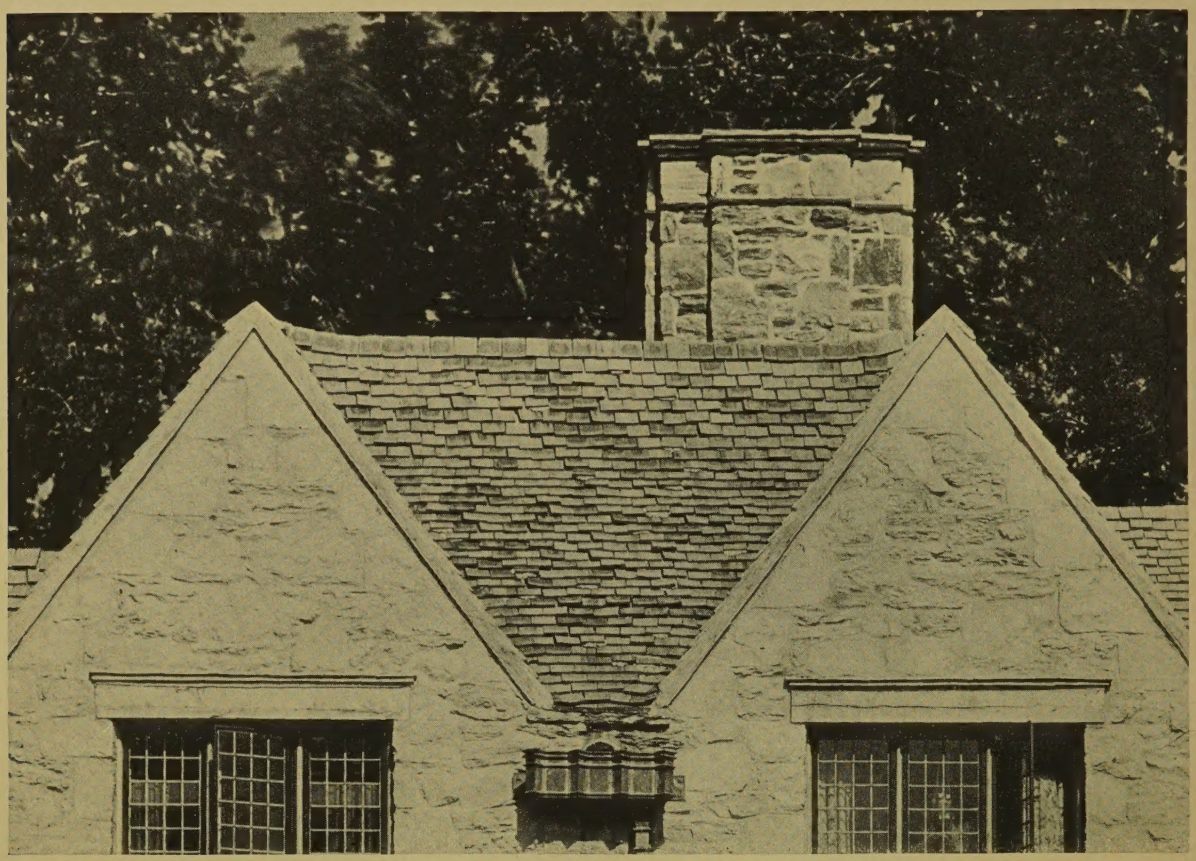
ALMSHOUSES, CHIPPING CAMPDEN, GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ALMSHOUSES, CHIPPING CAMPDEN, GLOUCESTERSHIRE


The Almshouses, Chipping Campden
Facade : Scale 1/32 inch to 1 foot
Stone Ridge
Coping
Label mould (Lower string similar)
Head
Cill
Master-mullion
Mullion
Jamb
Base
Glass Line
Door Jamb Detail
Scale for Details 3/4 inch to 1 foot
Chimney Details
Half-plan of Chimney
Masonry ashlar-faced average thickness 6" Joints 1/16 inch run in Lime putty. One through bonder to every 2 sq yds of facing.
Lead R.W.Hs & pipes
Curb round flowerbeds projects 1'-9" with quadrant ends
Sections A.A., B.B.
Elevation Scale 1/4 inch to 1 foot

SEE PHOTOGRAPHS ON OPPOSITE PAGE

TILE ROOFS FOR COTSWOLD ARCHITECTURE



Detail of a recently completed roof on which IMPERIAL Roofing Tiles were used

THE OLD HOUSES in the Cotswold district of England are the inspiration today for much of our domestic architecture. Intimate but yet with a certain degree of formality, they are particularly appealing to us in general character and at the same time their unsymmetrical massing permits an irregularity in sizes and locations of rooms which fits in well with the living arrangements of the average American family.

The various materials which are essential in obtaining the character of these fine old houses are readily supplied by American manufacturers; one can easily secure proper metal casement windows, lead gutters and leader heads, decorative plaster and that very important part of a design — the appropriate roofing material.

IMPERIAL roofing tiles give a faithful reproduction of the weathered Cotswold roofs. Their texture and thickness give the same quality and feeling of weight; their colors give the same general tone; and at the same time their unreflecting surfaces maintain the planes of the roof at all times, never fading into the sky on glaring sunny days,

IMPERIAL roofing tiles are made both in the lighter, simpler patterns and the heavier, handmade types in varying widths; but whichever are used the completed roof will be both satisfying and appropriate with the stone walls of Cotswold architecture.

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